

REMARKS

The Office Action dated July 13, 2004, and the patents cited therein have been carefully reviewed, and in view of the above changes and following remarks reconsideration and allowance of all the claims pending in the application are respectfully requested.

The Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) Over Sidman

Claims 1, 2 and 23 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Sidman, U.S. Patent No. 5,247,398.

Applicants have amended claim 1 to include the limitations of claim 7, which has been indicated to contain allowable subject matter. Accordingly, claim 7 has been cancelled, and the dependency of both claims 8 and 9 has been amended to depend from claim 1.

Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that amended claim 1 is allowable. It follows that claims 2 and 23, which each incorporate the limitations of amended claim 1, are each allowable for at least the same reasons that amended claim 1 is considered allowable.

Consequently, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw this rejection and allow claims 1, 2 and 23.

The Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) Over Sidman In View of Rabin

Claims 3-6, 14, 17 and 26 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Sidman in view of Rubin et al. (Rubin), U.S. Patent No. 6,421,195.

Applicants respectfully submit that claims 3-6, 14, 17 and 26, which each incorporate the limitations of amended claim 1, are allowable for at least the same reasons that amended claim 1 is considered allowable.

Consequently, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw this rejection and allow claims 3-6, 14, 17 and 26.

**The Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) Over Sidman
And Rubin And Further In View Of Hamann**

Claims 11-13 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Sidman and Rubin and further in view of Hamann et al. (Hamann), U.S. Patent No. 6,233,206.

Applicants respectfully submit that claims 11-13, which each incorporate the limitations of amended claim 1, are allowable for at least the same reasons that amended claim 1 is considered allowable.

Consequently, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw this rejection and allow claims 11-13.

**The Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) Over Sidman
and Rubin And Further In View Of Clifford, Jr.**

Claim 15 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Sidman and Rubin and further in view of Clifford, Jr., U.S. Patent No. 5,276,566.

Applicants respectfully submit that claim 15, which incorporates the limitations of amended claim 1, is allowable for at least the same reasons that amended claim 1 is considered allowable.

Consequently, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw this rejection and allow claim 15.

The Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) Over Sidman and Rubin And Further In View Of Mallory

Claims 18, 19 and 25 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Sidman and Rubin and further in view of Mallory, U.S. Patent No. 6,430,123.

Applicants have added new claim 27, which is based on originally filed claims 1, 18 and 20. Claim 20 has been indicated to contain allowable subject matter. Claims 18 and 20 have been accordingly cancelled, and the dependency of claims 19, 21 and 22 have been amended to depend from newly added claim 27.

Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that newly added claim 27 is allowable. It follows that claim 19, which incorporates the limitations of newly added claim 27, is allowable for at least the same reasons that newly added claim 27 is considered allowable. Further, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 25, which incorporates the limitations of amended claim 1, is allowable for at least the same reasons that amended claim 1 is considered allowable.

Consequently, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw this rejection and allow claims 18, 19 and 25.

CONCLUSION

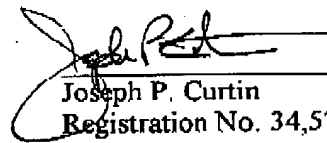
In view of the above arguments, it is urged that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner find that a telephonic or personal interview would expedite passage to issue of the present application, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

A general authorization under 37 C.F.R. § 1.25(h), second sentence, is hereby given to credit or debit Deposit Account No. 09-0441 for the instant filing and for any other fees during the pendency of this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16, 1.17 and 1.18.

It is requested that this application be passed to issue with claims 1-6, 8-17, 19, and 21-27.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: August 10, 2004



Joseph P. Curtin
Registration No. 34,571
1469 N.W. Morgan Lane
Portland, Oregon 97229-5291
(503) 296-8373
(503) 297-0452 (facsimile)